

REMARKS

This Amendment is being filed concurrently with a Request for Continued Examination.

Claims 1-10 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended. The amendments to claim 1 are supported in the pending application in at least page 10, lines 18-22; and, for example, Fig. 1A and Fig. 3. No new matter is added. In view of at least the following remarks, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,835,192 to Guidotti et al. ("Guidotti"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Guidotti fails to disclose at least "a second leak preventer in sheet form disposed above an upper side of the first leak preventer and positioned over a rear part of the first leak preventer," as recited in independent claim 1. The Office Action refers to Fig. 5 of Guidotti and states that item 9 and item 6 are equivalent to a first and second leak preventer, respectively. However, claim 1 recites that the second leak preventer is disposed above "an upper side of the first leak preventer." As defined in the pending application at page 10, the "upper" side refers to a side that is close to the skin of a user when the absorbent article is worn by the user. The article described in Guidotti has the opposite configuration. Specifically, as stated in Guidotti at col. 7, lines 40-44, layer 9 faces the user when the article is worn, such that liquid impermeable portion 6 is located on the underside of liquid impermeable layer 9.

The Office Action also asserts that "if Fig. 5 of Guidotti is turned upside down, reference character 9 is still considered as the first leak preventer and reference character 6 is still considered as the second leak preventer." However, because claim 1 recites that the second leak preventer is disposed above an "upper side" of the first leak preventer where the "upper side" is defined to be the side close to a user's body, Guidotti does not suggest the

claimed subject matter because it unambiguously states that liquid impermeable layer 9 is positioned to face a user when the article is in use. That is to say, article in Guidotti is configured to have a certain orientation when it is worn, which does not disclose or suggest the configurations embodied in the pending claims.

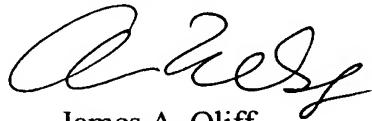
Furthermore, Guidotti fails to anticipate the claims because it does not disclose an absorber which extends "from the front part of the first leak preventer beneath the second leak preventer in at least one layer," as recited in pending claim 1. Accordingly, even if the upside down configuration of Guidotti suggested by the Examiner is accepted, the liquid storage regions 2, 3 of Guidotti do not extend to a front part of liquid impermeable layer 9. As stated in Guidotti at col. 7, lines 44-49, the article has a central opening 10, which is disposed between liquid storage regions 2 and 3. Accordingly, these regions do not extend to a front part of a first leak preventer, as required in claim 1. Thus, for at least these reasons claim 1 is patentable over Guidotti.

Claims 2-10 depend from claim 1 and are therefore also patentable over Guidotti for at least the reasons enumerated above, as well as for the additional features they recite.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:

Request for Continued Examination

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